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Christian America in the New World

An Interpretation of the
Interchurch World Movement

By Secretary
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• A QUARTERLY •

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Christian America in the New World

An Interpretation of the Interchurch World Movement

BY SECRETARY CORNELIUS H. PATTON, D. D.

We are living in a day when great movements come suddenly, forcefully and with large promise of permanence.

We are living in a day of divine precipitations. Society holds in solution so many spiritual and moral forces that when God's Spirit moves upon it, the process of crystallization is a very rapid one. There is a speeding up of the processes of redemption all over the world. The old prophecy is being fulfilled, "I, the Lord, will hasten it in its time."

Five years ago who would have dared predict that when we celebrate the Pilgrim Tercentenary in 1920 it will be in a saloonless nation?

Five years ago who would have supposed that the principle of woman's suffrage would be so widely accepted at this time throughout the world?

If the Interchurch World Movement has come with a rush—almost taking our breath away, as its world-embracing plans have emerged and denomination after denomination has fallen into line, it should not cause us to doubt or lead to a state of bewilderment; all this is in keeping with the spirit of the age in which we live. We should rather rejoice to find the Church clearly in the

lead of the forces which make for the spiritual and moral betterment of mankind.

It was Dr. Shailer Matthews, the well known editor, educator and theological critic of Chicago University, who said, "The Interchurch World Movement is the greatest piece of coöperative activity Protestantism has ever undertaken;" and it was Mr. J. D. Rockefeller, Jr., the keen business man and student of affairs, who expressed the judgment, "I believe under God's leadership this movement will become the greatest power for righteousness in all the world." If these opinions should be only approximately true, we have here an enterprise demanding our earnest study.

THE RIGHT POINT OF VIEW

There are a number of points of view from which we may regard this merging of the Protestant forces of America. The one that appeals to me as likely to prove historically correct is that this is the inevitable response of the Church to the demands of the new age. Something of the kind had to be. The Church found herself under compulsion to bring about a new alignment of forces or confess her inability to cope with the conditions of the world as it emerges from the war. The alternative of going on in the old disunited, unplanned, ineffective way was not to be thought of. That there are difficulties in following this coöperative road no sane observer would deny. But how about the difficulties of staying behind? Is that a possibility we care to contemplate?

THE LESSONS OF THE WAR

The Church in America has learned the lessons of the war too thoroughly to be content with a policy of marking time. To mark time in this age, or any other age as for that, is to go backwards. Five great lessons appear which bear upon interchurch activities.

There was first that awful look into the heart of this world, its selfishness, its brutality, its disregard of everything we had held sacred—human life most of all. No need of traversing here the process by which we had been illusioned and by which we were disillusioned. Suffice it to say that the war stripped off the veneer of civilization and culture and showed us the naked soul of man. Every word of Christ and His apostles was confirmed. Our easy going optimism, our cultural complacency was forever smashed. If the world was a "Palace of Art" it became, as in Tennyson's vision, a Palace of Sin.

Moreover, the war has left a trail of innocent suffering and of distress that causes the stoutest heart to quail. The ancient woes of ignorance, of spiritual darkness, of filth, of disease, have been brought into the glare of the modern day, and in addition there are the new woes of the regions which have been devastated by the war. Twenty centuries after Christ and there ensues the greatest year of suffering in all history! What kind of a Church would it be that could go on in the old way!

The second lesson is as to the indispensableness of the Church. Dr. Charles E. Jefferson in his book, *"What the War Has Taught Us"* (Revell) has dwelt forcefully on this point. Statesmen, financiers and prominent educators are joining the preachers in saying that the Church is the only hope of society.

"In the recognition of the fact of the Fatherhood of God and of the divine purpose for the world which are central to the message of Christianity we shall discover the ultimate foundation for the reconstruction of our ordered and harmonious life for all men." This is not a passage from a sermon in the City Temple, London, or Broadway Tabernacle, New York, or from an editorial in some religious paper; it is an extract from the New Year's Message of the British premiers to the British people. Even Wall Street must have its say on this sub-

ject, although its idea of the Church seems to be a training school for sanctified policemen who shall guard the safe-deposit vaults of the rich.

To believers in the Church of Christ as the divinely appointed agency for human redemption, the new sense of need has come with irresistible force.

But with this lesson of the indispensable character of the Church came the consciousness of an unpreparedness and an inefficiency humiliating in the extreme. Everybody demanded that the Church should come to the rescue of a bruised and suffering world; but could the Church respond? Clearly, the Church of the old days could not. There was too much division, too much complacency, too much preoccupation with the personal enjoyment of religion. It took the war to restore the horizon of Christ. Many things the Church was doing efficiently. In spots it was giving a fairly good account of itself. I have little sympathy with the wholesale criticism to which the Church was subjected during the war years. The difficulty was far other than what was usually pointed out. It was not a lack of patriotism; that charge fell flat; it was a lack of spiritual vision, of sense of solidarity, of nerve, of willingness to stand squarely by the proposition of Christ. Christ's program was a world program and the power he promised was conditioned upon that program being accepted. No program, no power. A Church which exists primarily for itself is a Church which separates itself from the sources of spiritual energy. The real, the constructive criticism arose from within the Church, and this criticism is bearing fruit today. A Church which is indispensable is a Church which must be made irresistible.

A tremendous lesson was that of the willingness of people to make great sacrifices when summoned by a noble cause. The spectacle of the young men of our churches by the hundreds of thousands offering their lives for their country and the world is one we cannot

forget. Almost equally impressive was the spectacle of our older men, business and professional, offering their money and their talents without stint in the same cause. And the women—who has attempted to measure their devotion? What a demonstration we had! How we needed it! For years the Church had been soft pedaling on heroism. Self-sacrifice was in the creed but not in the practice of the typical member. Christ would not have recognized multitudes of His followers. “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” How dared we print those columns of “benevolences” in our denominational Year Book in the fellowship of such a Master! Dr. W. W. Pinson has well said:—“We have been singing, ‘Like a Mighty Army Moves the Church of God.’ Can we sing it now? We have seen how a great army moves. It levies its billions of dollars, and gets them. It enters our kitchens and tells us what we may eat. It builds ships, requisitions factories, builds cities over night, and takes over whole railroad systems. It demands our best. Mothers kiss their boys good-bye, and send them to face cannon. Men go singing by the million to ‘the red rampart’s slippery edge.’ If we dare sing like that, we must set an undreamed of standard of loyalty to the Prince of Peace. We have not been marching; we have been marking time.”

The remaining lesson was of the deep satisfaction which came from working together. America did her part in the war because for the time we forgot our factions and differences and allowed ourselves to be moved by a common impulse of patriotism. As never before the country was united in a common peril, a common task. And the churches shared in this great experience. We were no strangers to one another in those days. We found one another in the practical activities of the great struggle. We learned new truth in the old adage, “In

union there is strength". Let it be noted right here to the credit of the Church that whereas the nations since the war have fallen apart and devoted themselves to wrangling and fighting, the people of Christ are consolidating their newly found unity for the service of mankind.

The vision of a needy world, the hope of that world resting upon the Church, the Church's inadequacy for the task, the dormant powers of sacrifice, the compulsion of coöperation—these were the experiences which presaged a Church awakening to new life and strength.

What shall the answer be?

DECEMBER 17, 1918

Hardly was the ink dry upon the armistice at Versailles when God put it into the heart of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Southern Presbyterian Church of the United States to call a conference of Christian leaders representing the whole range of Christian activity, for the purpose of considering a union of our forces in a world wide advance. Note the source of the suggestion. It came from one of the most conservative bodies in the United States,—a body not given to emotional rashness or fond of launching sensational schemes. If one had been asked to guess he would hardly have thought of a less likely source for a revolutionary movement of this kind. Such is the way with God.

There had been fore-shadowing events, of course. A New York business man, Mr. James M. Speers, after sending five sons into the war, in an address before the Foreign Missions Conference urged that the time had come for the missionary agencies of the Church to join in a united appeal for recruits and money. He pleaded that the Christian people of many communities, without regard to denominational connection, were ready, as a result of the war experience, to act as a unit in promoting

the causes of the Church. Back of that was the steady advance of the coöperative movement among the churches manifesting itself in local and national ways too numerous to mention. If the new alignment was sudden it came not without preparation.

The conference was held in New York on December 17, 1918, and was largely attended. The discussions were interspersed with seasons of solemn prayer. There was only one opinion:—The time has come for Protestant, Christian America to act; the divine mandate is upon us. A representative committee of twenty was appointed with instruction to report a plan at the meetings of the Foreign Missions Conference and Home Mission Council and other bodies representing the educational and philanthropic work of the Evangelical Churches. Four of these bodies met in January, 1919, and all four, hearing the report of the committee, voted endorsement and referred the question to the denominational boards.

Upon this general recommendation the boards gave critical and unhurried consideration to the coöperative plan. One after another they fell into line, until 182 stood officially committed. In most cases the approval of a board was conditioned upon the authorization of the national ecclesiastical body under which the Board acted. The national assemblies meeting in the spring and fall of 1919 gave the Interchurch Movement careful study. In one case the debate occupied nearly three days. The decision of certain prominent denominations made it necessary to limit the movement to the boards of Evangelical Churches. At the beginning it had been planned to include certain union enterprises considered essential to the Church's program, such as the International Committee of the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., the American Bible Society, and the International S. S. Association. These, let us hope, will be given a place in the movement

at no distant day. Thus far forty different denominations, enrolling about 80% of Protestant strength, are in the movement, with others "hopefully well affected".

THE RULING IDEA.

The aim of the Interchurch World Movement is spiritual and practical. It disclaims any responsibility in the realms of doctrine and polity. Organic unity is not its purpose. Its objectives can be accomplished without alteration of creed or polity. No coöperating board need change its structure, or consolidate with any other board. The Movement takes the framework of denominational organization as it finds it. Undoubtedly many of its leaders and advocates believe in denominational federation if not in organic unity; they would welcome any well considered steps in that direction; but as for the Interchurch Movement it seeks to become a League of Service, not of belief or administration. The world cannot wait for the Church to settle all its difficulties of an intellectual and ecclesiastical nature; the world demands the simple Gospel of helpfulness in the name of Christ.

What is aimed at is a program of advance in which each branch of the Church shall perform its task not in isolation *but as a part of the whole*.

SPECIFICALLY.

Starting with this ruling idea five processes were found to be necessary, giving rise to as many departments of activity.

1. *The Survey of the World.*

From the beginning it was the unanimous judgment of both ministers and laymen that as a precursor of any program which might be launched there should be a comprehensive study of the field of activity at home and abroad, in an effort to ascertain what had been done,

what had not been done, and what are the conditions under which we must proceed. The idea of the survey is well known in the business world and business men were emphatic in insisting upon its application to this forward movement of the Protestant forces. In order to try out this judgment, in December, 1918, I submitted the proposition to a group of fifteen prominent business men in the city of Bridgeport. The unanimous verdict, rendered with characteristic promptness, was "Do it; but not this year. Wait until you have learned the real situation at home and abroad. We are tired of campaigns based upon the pooling of guesses during the war period; of lump sums based upon no actualities, except the immensity of the need. We were content then because it was war, and we wanted to do our part with the abandon of patriotism. But this is peace, not war, and the Church should make its plans on *the basis of ascertained facts*. Secure the facts, lay them before the Christian public and see what the response will be."

Will anyone challenge the soundness of that advice? A department of surveys was organized and has been hard at work for a year. The process is not yet complete; but a sufficient basis has been laid to warrant a definite appeal. The denominations participating in this appeal base their askings not upon what they think the Churches will stand for or upon what idealistic dreamers would like, but upon what are the actual needs of our country and world so far as those needs might be met by an earnest and awakened Church.

2. *A Process of Education.*

Obviously when the facts revealed by the surveys are in hand there must be a campaign of education to make these known among the churches. There must be a partnership of knowledge. People pray and help and give because they are convinced of the need. Emotional ap-

peals go for little in these days. Interest follows knowledge. Hence all this activity in holding state and county conventions; in producing maps, graphs, statistics and pictures in stereopticon form; this output of leaflets, posters, advertisements and printed surveys. We have 25,000,000 Protestant Church members to arouse. The task is large, but the war has taught us how great masses, a whole nation, may be educated in a brief space of time.

3. *The Enlistment of Life.*

The surveys established what many suspected would be the case, that the crying need is for workers at home and abroad. Certain denominations are reporting nearly one-third of their pulpits vacant, and the life of the Church languishing correspondingly. The Presbyterian Foreign Board reports that it could take the entire output of the Presbyterian theological seminaries year by year, leaving no candidates for the home churches. The dearth of medical, educational, industrial, agricultural and business missionaries is alarming. The laborers never were so few in proportion to the immensity of the task. There must be such a stirring of the young life of our Churches and schools as has never been attempted. A life service campaign was found to be imperative and a department was organized for that one purpose.

4. *A Financial Ingathering.*

Few can go; all can give. Money is not the prime consideration in saving the world, but the world cannot be saved without money. It was inevitable that the survey should reveal the need of money in large sums if an adequate program was to be carried out. Let us be thankful for that, since it gives us all a chance.

After the magnificent response of Church people in connection with war charities, such as Red Cross relief and the Young Men's Christian Association army work,

there is no room for doubt as to the Church possessing sufficient resources to finance what actually needs to be done. In the opinion of pastors and Church leaders, without regard to the Interchurch connections, the time has come when we must rise to new levels of consecration in the use of our money. The giving of the Protestant Church, whether considered in the bulk or reduced to the per capita basis, is shamefully inadequate. As one man expressed it, "The Church has failed in its money program more than in any other department of work." It is reliably stated that the per capita giving of all the Protestant Churches for all objects is three cents per day!

Clearly in a situation of this kind the call was for concerted action among the denominations. The Interchurch World Movement, with its plan of a united advance and its coöperative scheme of publicity and education, proves to be an effective instrument ready to our hand.

Nothing the Interchurch Movement has attempted is more timely or better devised than its appeal for "Stewardship", with its insistence upon the Divine ownership of all our property and the importance of our recognizing that fact by the setting apart of a definite proportion of our income for distinctly religious work. Already thousands of Christians have been led to accept this principle, the usual proportion adopted being the tithe. If this movement continues as it has begun, in a few years we shall have gone a long ways toward solving the financial problem of the Church, so far as the present generation is concerned. The payment of ministers' salaries, the providing of pensions, the upkeep of the Church property, the erection of Church edifices—the whole support of the local Church will be provided for, as well as the promotion of educational and missionary work. The stewardship campaign alone is a justification for the Interchurch Movement. I venture to prophesy that five years from now this will be recognized as true on every side.

We are on the verge of a radical change of sentiment on the part of Christian people as to the use of their property.

5. *Spiritual Resources.*

Some have feared that the Interchurch Movement implied too great an emphasis upon the machinery of organization and the externals of a cause which by the nature of the case must depend upon the spiritual and the unseen. None have appreciated this danger more than the projectors of the movement. Their personal character and record should be a sufficient guarantee.

From the first there has been the strongest kind of emphasis upon the need of developing *the Spiritual Resources of the Church*. A department of carefully selected men has taken up the study of this essential matter and has stood ready to re-enforce every vitalizing effort the Churches might welcome. In the nature of the case the development of the prayer-life of the Church is not a matter for extensive organization. One hesitates even to suggest prayer bands on a wide scale, or even to advocate prayer cycles, for fear of the mechanical and the conventional in what should be the soul's most vital occupation. Yet under these limitations much helpful stimulus has been given.

The meeting of so many Churches in evangelistic campaigns has been a signal blessing, as has also the large use made of wholesome devotional literature.

If the Interchurch World Movement is not primarily a spiritual movement I am unable to say where we are to look for such a movement. It is born of nothing else than a passion for the redemption of this world through Jesus Christ.

THE VERDICT.

As laymen and ministers have come to understand the scope and spirit of these plans they have in increasing numbers reached the conviction that the movement is calculated to meet the new world situation as nothing else could have done. They have said, "How sensible, how businesslike, how inevitable. This is the thing which, under God, can save the day." A distinguished American physician, whose name is known across the country, upon returning from France, where he did brilliant service, was oppressed by the thought of the immensity of the task confronting the Church of America. The relief of physical suffering in Europe and Asia and the composing of the social problems of the awakening world seemed to him an overwhelming task. He said to himself, "Is the Church big enough to do this thing? I fear it is not." One night he attended a supper, at which the surveys and plans for the Interchurch World Movement were presented in summarized form. It was the first intimation he had received of what was going on. His response was immediate and enthusiastic, and he remarked to his wife, "Now I begin to see the way out. If we can finance and carry through these great plans, the Church will prove her worth and her adequacy beyond question."

The Interchurch World Movement has come to the Kingdom for such a time as this. It is a God-given instrument to enable the Protestant Churches of America to get together on a working program for the country and the world. Attention has been called to the remark of Cardinal Gibbons, to the effect that the Roman Church is the only Church which knows its own mind. May we not feel and assert, in view of this new development, that the Protestant churches are coming to know their own mind. If they do not know their own mind in respect to creed and ecclesiastical form they at least know what they ought to be doing to bring the world to God.

A BOLD FAITH.

In no respect is the Interchurch World Movement rendering a greater service than in restoring vigor and tone to the faith of the Church. Rev. Silvester Horne of London in an address just before he died, spoke to this effect, "What the Church lacks is not so much spirituality as nerve. We are afraid of our proposition. We refuse to stand on the full platform of Christ. We are too timid." Before anyone attempts to deny that imputation let him examine candidly the case of his own denomination, let him study her plans, and look into her statistics. Has not the prevailing note been one of timidity rather than of courage? We are supposed to be a conquering Church; we follow the victorious Christ; we sing some impressive hymns which convey that impression. How about our actions? Does the community ordinarily feel that the Church in its midst is a victorious concern or something of worthy but rather feeble energy. On a wider scale have we given the impression of being out for *world conquest*? Let us be honest and fearless in applying the test. Surely the time has come when we must recover our valor or confess failure at the point where our chief impression should be made.

Shakespeare makes Macbeth say of Banquo,

"'Tis much he dares,
And to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety."

Wisdom and valor—that is what we need in proper balance. But of late the Church has been long on wisdom and short on valor. Learning has increased to a remarkable extent, but faith has lacked the quality of holy boldness which it had at the beginning. Let us thank the Interchurch Movement for its courage in bringing the Church to face its whole task. The best thing about

these plans is their greatness. They have the Apostolic ring; they take us back to Christ. In the Book of Acts, when Peter and John were haled before the Sanhedrin, it is remarked: "Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; *and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.*"

May it come to pass that the world of our day shall account for the boldness of Christians on the ground of companionship with Christ!

THE READY WORLD.

The Interchurch World Movement has as its objective the giving of the whole Gospel to the whole world by the whole Church. It is inclusive, or hopes to become so, of all the missionary activities of the Protestant Evangelical Churches of North America. Its plans look to reaching the vast unchurched populations in our American cities, especially the foreign populations; it is giving careful attention to migrant groups of laborers, like wheat harvesters, lumbermen, fruit pickers and the like; it is studying the Negro problem, the problem of the village Church and the Church in sparsely settled communities. These activities commend it to all who desire to see America intelligent, healthy, prosperous and Christian. If I now mention particularly America's impact upon the foreign field it is not to minimize what is proposed at home; it is because the rise of this movement synchronizes with the period of special opportunity and pressure in non-Christian lands.

Even before the war we had what was called a New Era for the foreign missionary work, and conditions abundantly warranted the use of the term. The Near East and the Far East, Africa, too, and the Island regions were coming forward with a rush. It was a commonplace in those days for missionary speakers to say, "Once

we used to pray God to open the doors to the Gospel in heathen lands. God answered that prayer and today we see the doors open on every side. Our prayer now must be 'Lord, help us to enter the doors Thou hast opened before us'!"

What language is left to describe the present situation arising from the war? One has called it "a landslide of opportunity". Go where we will in mission lands and we find the opposition giving way, prejudice disappearing, and a warm welcome to the exponent of pure Christianity.

The unifying of the non-Christian world through the war is a result not to be crowded out of our minds by the bitterness of political strife. Democracy has become a world idea and is bound to become a world possession. The appreciation of human personality has come to India and China. The brotherhood of man is recognized as the working principle for society in Korea and Japan. The ideals and standards of western Christian civilization are acknowledged throughout the Orient and are being assimilated with astonishing rapidity in business and commercial life. They are saying in China "We have taken over from the West its scheme of government, its system of education and its business code and we are worse off now than we were before. Perhaps we have left out the essential thing, the religion of the west; perhaps it is Christianity which will save us." And so their leaders and their educated men are beseeching us to teach them the way of the Christ. The hour of China's greatest political weakness and humiliation is the hour of her brightest religious outlook. Every traveler and observer brings back that diagnosis of the situation.

The China situation alone would be a sufficient warrant, let us say compulsion for the Interchurch World Movement. In that oldest of the nations one-quarter of the human beings who walk this earth stand at the door of the Kingdom. Is this a time for the Church to hold back?

Can we justify ourselves in continuing in the old, divided and inadequate way? Can we fail to see that God's Spirit, which is moving so mightily upon a land like China, is moving upon the Churches of America in order that they may put aside their differences, their poverty of sacrifice and unite for a victorious advance?

To China add Japan, just now a menace to the peace of the world because of the heathen-minded group of imperialistic, truculent militarists who are in control of her affairs. If ever there was a time when America ought to stand behind and reinforce a Christian movement in a foreign land that time is now in Japan. The darker we paint the picture of Japan's selfish aggressions in Korea and Shantung, the stronger the argument for supporting the Church in that land. "This is the greatest piece of news which ever has come to us from the homeland", was the verdict of the missionaries in Japan last summer when I was privileged to tell them of the Interchurch plans.

To Japan add India, add Africa, add especially the Near East, and you will find the compulsion of this movement made doubly strong. It is a day of mass movements toward Christianity, a day like that of the Book of Acts, a day of great fulfilments. What is the Church in America proposing to do in such a time? Keep on in the old way? Who has anything to suggest, aside from this leaguings of our plans and forces in this Interchurch program of advance?

THE PLIGHT OF THE BOARDS.

The Foreign Boards have seen the crisis approaching, but have not seen the way out. Before these new plans arose we had been fairly driven into union of effort in our higher educational work. The demand for Christian education was so insistent, the field so vast, that separate denominational schools could not fill the need. For some ten years there had been a process of getting together and

some twenty union colleges and universities had sprung up in the continent of Asia. There was, for example, the Union University in Peking, the center of China's political, social and educational life, in which three American societies and one British had joined forces. There were similar combinations in Nanking, the ancient capital; in Foochow; and in other great centers. There were union colleges for women in Peking, Nanking and Madras.

This union of effort was everywhere commended as businesslike and Christian—nowhere more so than in America. But few realized what was involved. Universities require sites and an array of buildings; they must have recitation halls, laboratories, chapels, dormitories, endowments; their faculties must be composed of able men and women receiving adequate support. The Boards found themselves unable to finance so many great projects at the same time. The situation was getting away from us. The very success of the work was proving its undoing. Could it be under the Providence of God that this necessary development had occurred abroad and that there was to be no corresponding change in the situation at home? Was God's Spirit moving upon them and not upon us? That did not seem to be God's way. And it was not God's way. Today the opening of the hearts of the people in the homeland is found to match the opening of doors in lands afar.

There has been much prayer over what seemed to be the insoluble financial problem of the Foreign Boards, and today we are seeing those prayers answered in a way we had not dreamed possible. Not merely a few people of wealth here and there are to help in this advance but multitudes are to take hold; the whole Church is to come into the partnership of great things.

SAVING THE CREDIT OF AMERICA.

Have you thought of the Interchurch World Movement

as America's chance to make good before a disappointed world? Has it occurred to you that no matter how much our political leaders have failed us in this supreme hour of duty and honor, the Christian people of America still have a chance? The challenge comes to the Church all the stronger because it is being refused by the state. How else shall we bear our humiliation before the world? America, which went into the war placarding her passion for service, her devotion to the good of all mankind, America, whose idealism was the strength of the armies of the Allies, the solace and hope of the crushed and bleeding nations throughout the world—America to fail them in the end!

"We were the last to go in", remarked a man the other day, "and we are the first to slip out." A father who had lost his eldest son in the battle of Belleau Woods, after perusing the account of one of the wrangling debates over the treaty in the United States Senate, laid aside his paper with the remark, "1919 is to me the saddest year of all. I can stand my personal loss, but this is too much."

Again, I say, the Interchurch World Movement is come to the Kingdom for such a time as this. As a friend wrote the other day, "In the support of this united appeal and in the carrying out of the great plans, we may, we must re-establish confidence in America and appreciation of her spirit of service and of goodwill which rose to the high-water mark during the war. If the nation has sagged in its idealism, let the Church of Christ rise to a new level of devotion."

DANGERS.

Are there dangers connected with a movement of this kind? There certainly are. The movement claims no exemption on that score. It is involved in frail human nature as much as any other enterprise of the Kingdom. It is unfortunate when people allow themselves to

judge of a spiritual movement of this kind by infelicities here and there. Such judgments are unscientific, unfair. There has been no great movement in history which has not been condemned by those who follow surface indications rather than the deep currents of life. Historians are fond of putting us on our guard in that respect. In seeking to form a just estimate of a thing of this magnitude it is well to apply Dr. Arnold's comment upon Sophocles. "He saw things steadily and he saw them whole." The Interchurch World Movement leaders will welcome any criticisms or suggestions arising in that way. They are human; they have made their mistakes; they should have the privilege of learning by their mistakes. But let *us* not make the mistake of condemning off hand a movement so clearly providential, which has received the endorsement of so many strong denominational bodies, and which has brought to the front so many leaders of spiritual devotion and power. The call comes for every Christian of world-size and valiant build to get behind this thing with all his might.

THE CHURCH ON THE MOUNTAIN TOP.

Let me close this interpretation by quoting the opening words of the report on the financial plans of the Interchurch World Movement, presented at Atlantic City last January, where 1,500 delegates, representing the co-operating denominations assembled to receive the surveys and to decide upon the plans.

"For the first time in the history of the Christian churches of North America they have ascended the mountain-top and cast their eyes over the whole world. The surveys have revealed the marvelous blessings which Almighty God has vouchsafed upon the efforts of His Church, but they have also revealed the magnitude of the unfinished task and the inadequacy of the efforts which the church has as yet put forth. These surveys stand be-

fore the Christian church as the greatest challenge it has ever faced since it received the Great Commission.

The Church can meet this challenge only as it pours forth its life and its resources. Its young men and women can respond to the Macedonian call of this modern world only as the church shall send them forth. The dedication of its wealth is as truly an act of worship as the dedication of its young life. God is calling upon the church to lay both upon His altar at this crucial hour. This financial ingathering in which we are about to participate should be an unparalleled expression of the spiritual power of the Christian Church. As stewards of the boundless resources which God has entrusted to us in these days we are now to give account of our stewardship."

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